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Addendum

Programme questions: evaluation (item 4 (e))

Report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services on the in-depth evaluation of the United Nations International Drug Control Programme

1. At its 2nd and 3rd meetings, on 1 June 1998, the Committee considered the report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services on the in-depth evaluation of the United Nations International Drug Control Programme transmitted to it under cover of a note by the Secretary-General stating his concurrence with the recommendations contained in the report (E/AC.51/1998/2).

Discussion

2. It was considered that the report identified a number of key issues that will require the further attention of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs. The view was expressed that the work of the Programme was valued. It was noted that the report was being considered by the Committee a few days before the opening of the twentieth special session of the General Assembly on the drug problem.

3. Concern was expressed regarding reductions in regular budget funds over the recent biennial budget periods. It was noted that some relevant activities had not been fully addressed because of the lack of sufficient resources, as pointed out in the report. It was observed that the prevalence of earmarked voluntary contributions in funding the Programme activities was the source of additional difficulties. It was observed that several proposals presented in the report implied new activities; the Commission on Narcotic Drugs should

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review these proposals, including financial implications. It was felt that the establishment of the new Office for Drug Control and Crime Prevention should not detract from the priorities of drug control, and that the Commission on Narcotic Drugs and the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice should retain their separate identities. It was observed that increased decentralization from Programme headquarters to its field offices was a positive development, but it should be matched by a stronger programme coordination function at headquarters. Mention was made of the importance of the media in disseminating information.

4. It was generally agreed that the recommendations presented in the report were appropriate and useful. In the course of the debate, the following observations were made:

(a) **Recommendation 3**. It was observed that recommendation 3 was addressing a very complex problem and should not be interpreted as a suggestion to amend the scheduling system provided for by the conventions. It was suggested that improvements could be sought not in the scheduling system itself but in the administrative and bureaucratic procedures involved;

(b) **Recommendation 4**. It was stated that in implementing recommendation 4 due attention should be given to the concerns of transit States. It was stated that recommendation 4 (b) should have included the issue of supply reduction;

(c) **Recommendation 13**. The recommended involvement of all relevant programmes and agencies of the United Nations system was strongly endorsed.

Conclusions and recommendations

5. The Committee commended the quality and comprehensive nature of the report and its analysis of the complex issues at hand.

6. The Committee recalled the high priority that Member States attached to the Programme, as reflected in the participation of many heads of state and high-level delegations in the twentieth special session of the General Assembly on the drug problem.

7. Bearing in mind that the Programme will need to implement the recommendations in the light of the outcome of the twentieth special session, the Committee endorsed recommendations 1 to 14 of the report and transmitted it for review and action by the Commission on Narcotic Drugs at its forty-second session.

8. The Committee recommended that the Programme be fully involved in and operate within the United Nations development assistance framework.

9. The Committee decided that the consolidation of the Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Division with the United Nations International Drug Control Programme should not undermine the critical importance of the comprehensive programme on drug control, which should be fully implemented in accordance with the medium-term plan for the period 1998-2001.

10. The Committee emphasized that the realignment of the Centre for International Crime Prevention with the United Nations International Drug Control Programme should result in better coordination between these entities and should produce important synergies, while safeguarding the multidisciplinary aspects of drug control policy.

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Addendum

Programme questions: evaluation (item 4 (e))

Report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services on the in-depth evaluation of the United Nations Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Programme

1. At its 3rd and 4th meetings, on 1 and 2 June 1998, the Committee considered the report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services on the in-depth evaluation of the United Nations Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Programme transmitted under cover of a note by the Secretary-General stating his concurrence with the recommendations contained in the report (E/AC.51/1998/3).

Discussion

2. It was agreed that the Programme was of high priority. Concern was expressed about the lack of resources in view of the extensive mandates that the Programme had to carry out and the importance of priority-setting was pinpointed. It was noted that the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice had strategic management responsibility for the Programme and was involved in streamlining its work and thus reducing the demands for substantive servicing so that more resources could be devoted to providing technical assistance to the countries in need. The Commission had also started work on a more dynamic approach to fund-raising. The role of Member States in improving the efficiency and effectiveness of the Programme, including in the reduction of the heavy reporting requirements, was pointed out.

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3. It was regretted that terrorism had not been covered in the in-depth evaluation report, despite its high-priority nature as identified in the medium-term plan. It was felt that the mainstreaming of gender issues should have been reflected in the report. The view was expressed that the evaluation should have looked into the various forms of organized transnational crime, economic crime, the laundering of the proceeds of crime, corruption, terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, environmental offences and illicit traffic in children.

4. It was agreed that a public information strategy would be useful to enhance the visibility of the Programme and support for it; such a strategy could also be used with an educational aim concentrating, in particular, on crime prevention and its root causes.

5. It was pointed out that cooperation of the Centre for International Crime Prevention with regional institutions should be considered a crucial element of the strategy of the Programme and should be encouraged.

6. The view was expressed that attention should be devoted to ensuring that the coordination or cooperation mechanisms work well given the array of partners of the Programme.

7. The significant development of electronic tools for dissemination was noted, but it was felt that traditional hard-copy forms of documentation should not be neglected. The view was expressed that high importance should be given to the assistance to be provided to the developing countries to enable them to use electronic tools such as the United Nations Crime and Justice Information Network (UNCJIN) and the United Nations Crime and Justice Clearing House (UNOJUST) adequately.

8. It was noted with satisfaction that the Programme included a regional adviser for Asia and the Pacific based at the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific and funded from extrabudgetary sources, and that significant substantive contributions were being made under this arrangement. However, concern was expressed that in the $30 million allocated to the regional commissions under the regular programme of technical cooperation, there was no provision for work on crime prevention and criminal justice; it was hoped that this situation would be redressed in the context of future regular budget allocations.

9. The view was expressed that the Centre for International Crime Prevention should also explore the possibility of cooperating with subregional organizations having responsibilities for crime prevention and criminal justice wherever they existed.

Conclusions and recommendations

10. The Committee was of the view that the Programme should give adequate attention to all mandated activities, *inter alia*, to the activities included as priorities in the medium-term plan.

11. The Committee recalled the high priority that Member States attached to the Programme and endorsed recommendations 1 to 17 contained in section V of the report.

12. The Committee recommended that the crucial role and mandate of the Department of Public Information should be borne in mind.

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Addendum

Programme questions: evaluation (item 4 (e))

Report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services on the triennial review of the implementation of the recommendations made by the Committee for Programme and Coordination at its thirty-fifth session on the evaluation of peacekeeping operations: start-up phase

1. At its 4th, 5th and 10th meetings on 2 and 5 June 1998, the Committee considered the report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services entitled "Triennial review of the implementation of the recommendations made by the Committee for Programme and Coordination at its thirty-fifth session on the evaluation of peacekeeping operations: start-up phase", transmitted under cover of a note by the Secretary-General stating his concurrence with the recommendations contained in the report (E/AC.51/1998/4).

Discussion

2. It was noted with appreciation that some evaluation recommendations had been implemented; it was also noted, however, that the implementation effort should be more thorough. The thrust of the report pinpointing deficiencies in implementation was noted. The view was expressed that much work appeared necessary to fulfil the recommendations from previous reports. While it was noted with satisfaction that the Resource Centre had been established, there was concern that the problems which are preventing the full use of the resources had not been addressed as yet. Concern was also expressed that the Guideline Standard Operating Procedures for the military component of peacekeeping operations had not been updated.

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3. It was noted that progress had been made in improving the standby arrangements referred to in paragraph 33 of the report. However, it was underscored that the Standby Forces High-Readiness Brigade (SHIRBRIG) referred to in paragraph 34 of the report should not be misconstrued as being a United Nations brigade. It was further underscored that the reference to SHIRBRIG should not have been included in the report. The view was expressed that it had no relevance to the United Nations standby arrangements.

4. The deficiencies that still remained in the procurement system were discussed, and emphasis was placed on the critical importance of efficient, transparent and cost-effective procurement of goods and services in support of peacekeeping operations. Concern was expressed that the field administration manual and the operational support manual were not yet in final form. The need for broadening the geographical base of the supplier roster and the procurement of goos and services on as wide a geographical basis as possible was emphasized. It was observed that a recommendation should have been made on procurement, as this area needed a lot of improvement.

5. Other topics discussed in the debate included the functioning and funding of the Lessons Learned Unit, the repatriation of civil police officers and military observers, the issue of gratis personnel and the adequacy of the resources of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, the nature and scope of training activities in the Department, the nature of rosters maintained by the Department and the status of the analytical budgeting system for peacekeeping operations. Regarding the repatriation of unqualified civilian police monitors, the view was expressed that the monitors should be tested in their respective countries before arrival in the mission area to avoid unnecessary expenses being borne by the police contributors.

6. The view was expressed that recommendation 3 did not conform with existing procedures. The Lessons Learned Unit did not have the mandate to modify existing policies and procedures; it could make recommendations to the relevant intergovernmental bodies for their consideration and approval. The recommendation, therefore, needed to be revised.

7. The view was expressed that monitoring of human rights could not be a component of the peacekeeping operations.

8. It was stated that there should be better coordination among departments in the Secretariat on the human rights component of peacekeeping operations, in particular there was a need for better training for personnel on human rights issues and more effective recruitment of human rights personnel for field operations.

Conclusions and recommendations

9. There was agreement in the Committee on the continued importance and relevance of peacekeeping operations.

10. The Committee recalled that in recent experience some peacekeeping operations had been mandated to include multiple tasks. The Committee recommended that consideration be given to the impact of this on the operations of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations.

11. The Committee endorsed recommendations 1 to 7 contained in section III of the report on the understanding that the Lessons Learned Unit did not have the mandate to modify existing policies and procedures that require intergovernmental concurrence.

12. As to recommendation 5 of the original evaluation (E/AC.51/1995/2 and Corr.1), the Committee reiterated its conclusion arrived at at its thirty-fifth session that the recommendation needed to be examined further by the relevant intergovernmental bodies.

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Programme questions: evaluation (item 4 (e))

Report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services on the triennial review of the implementation of the recommendations made by the Committee for Programme and Coordination at its thirty-fifth session on the evaluation of the programme on environment

1. At its 5th and 10th meetings, on 2 and 5 June 1998, the Committee considered the report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services on the triennial review of the implementation of the recommendations made by the Committee for Programme and Coordination at its thirty-fifth session on the evaluation of the programme on environment, transmitted to it under cover of a note by the Secretary-General stating his concurrence with the recommendations contained in the report (E/AC.51/1998/5)

Discussion

2. In relation to paragraph 2 of the note by the Secretary-General, the view was expressed that this report, being a follow-up report that does not address the entire United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) mandate, especially in the integration of trade, environment and development, cannot provide an input to the report that will be submitted to the General Assembly on the strengthening of United Nations activities in the area of environment.

3. The report was found to provide an informative review of progress made by UNEP in implementing the recommendations made by the Committee. It was observed that the reduction in resources during the period reviewed and managerial difficulties contributed

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to the lack of implementation of a number of recommendations. It was felt that the reduction in the appropriations for UNEP under the regular budget had led to the non-implementation of some of its activities. Paragraph 124 of the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21, adopted by the General Assembly in its resolution S/19-2 of 8 June 1997 in which it was stated that a revitalized UNEP should be supported by adequate, stable and predictable funding, was recalled. It was reaffirmed that the mandate of UNEP derived from Assembly resolution 2997 (XXVII) of 15 December 1972 and the revitalization of this mandate both by the Nairobi Declaration on the Role and Mandate of the United Nations Environment Programme of February 1997[1] and the outcome of the nineteenth special session on the review of the implementation of Agenda 21. Paragraph 123 of the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21, in which it was stated that UNEP was the principal United Nations body in the field of environment, was recalled. Confidence was expressed that the reform proposals of the new Executive Director, presented to the UNEP Governing Council at its fifth special session, in May 1998, would also contribute to the revitalization and strengthening of UNEP. It was noted that the Council had decided that UNEP should give priority, in the short and medium term, to: (a) environmental assessment, (b) coordination of environmental conventions, (c) freshwater, (d) technology transfer and industry and (e) support to Africa. It was observed that the recommendations of the Committee for Programme and Coordination at its thirty-fifth session should be implemented in that context.

4. It was stated that there was a need to reorient the coordination of the activities of the United Nations system on environment, an issue addressed in recommendation 2 of the in-depth evaluation of the United Nations programme on environment (E/AC.51/1995/3 and Corr.1). It was stated that UNEP should participate more fully in the system-wide coordination taking place under the Administrative Committee on Coordination. With respect to paragraph 10 of the triennial review, the view was expressed that UNEP had adequately implemented recommendation 2 and that it should continue to observe its role in promoting the coherent implementation of the environmental dimension of sustainable development within the United Nations system and as the leading global environmental authority that sets the global environmental agenda (see resolution S/19-2, annex, para. 123).

5. In the context of the importance of work done in the field of freshwater, referred to in the triennial review in relation to recommendation 3 of the in-depth evaluation, it was recalled that UNEP had been called upon to intensify its work in this field. There was a call made for UNEP to intensify its work in the field of freshwater in line with the decisions made at the sixth session of the Commission on Sustainable Development on freshwater, held in New York from 20 April to 1 May 1998. It was observed, however, that UNEP should concentrate strictly on environmental matters. Work in other fields, such as political and legal fields, should be conducted in other forums, as was in line with resolutions adopted at the sixth session of the Commission on Sustainable Development. With regard to the view expressed in paragraph 12 of the triennial review that strengthening UNEP action in some areas would not necessitate building strong in-house capacity, the view was expressed that internal scientific capacity is of particular importance to UNEP in view of its role in coordinating environmental activities in the United Nations system, based on its comparative advantage and scientific and technical expertise, as envisaged in paragraph 3 (d) of the Nairobi Declaration.[1] On the recommendation for the allocation of funds from the Environment Fund to other organizations, and the issue of funding in paragraph 31 of the triennial review, the view was expressed that in the light of the reductions in funds available to UNEP, the Environment Fund should be used for the implementation of UNEP activities, as was decided in paragraph 7 of the Nairobi Declaration, which affirmed the central importance of the Environment Fund as the principal source of financing for the

implementation of the programme of UNEP. The view was expressed that the reallocation of a 20 per cent budget line should be done in consultation with the Governing Council of UNEP and not with the institutions concerned.

6. The importance of environmental assessment was noted, including monitoring to facilitate response to environmental emergencies, an issue addressed in several recommendations of the in-depth evaluation. UNEP was strongly encouraged to work in collaboration with other organizations to gather environmental information.

7. Views were expressed that, as recommended in recommendations 7, 8 and 9 of the in-depth evaluation, the role of Earthwatch should not be enhanced, rather it should function in collaboration with UNEP's own network and Environment and Natural Resource Information Networks (ENRIN).

8. Regarding the work on indicators addressed in recommendation 9 of the in-depth evaluation, it was observed that this work should take into account the views of the developing countries. The extensive work done by other organizations on environmental indicators, including that of the World Bank, was noted, and UNEP was encouraged to work with others in this area. It was observed that UNEP should develop its own indicators to be examined by the Governing Council and then submitted to the General Assembly for its consideration.

9. With respect to recommendations 10 and 12 of the in-depth evaluation, it was recalled that in paragraph 119 of the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21 it was observed that institutional arrangements for the convention secretariats should ensure the appropriate autonomy necessary for them to be efficient at their respective locations, and in paragraph 123 it was stated that UNEP should strive to promote the effective implementation of those conventions in a manner consistent with the provisions of the conventions and the decisions of the conferences of the parties.

10. It was observed that UNEP had facilitated the exchange of information within the scientific community, but that it was important, at this stage, to pay adequate attention to the information needs of the decision makers, as recommended in recommendation 18 of the in-depth evaluation. In this context, the role of UNEP as an effective link between the scientific community and policy makers at the national and international levels (see para. 3 (e) of the Nairobi Declaration) was recalled.

11. The view was expressed that the matter of fund-raising addressed in recommendation 22 of the in-depth evaluation, including the mobilization of new and additional resources, was of the utmost importance. It was suggested that management costs of UNEP should be reduced in favour of programme funding.

Conclusions and recommendations

12. The Committee was of the view that UNEP should fully implement the recommendations contained in the in-depth evaluation.

13. The Committee recommended to the General Assembly that the triennial review be forwarded to the Governing Council of UNEP for its consideration.

Notes

[1] *Official Records of the General Assembly, Supplement No. 25 (A/52/25)*, annex, resolution 19/1, annex.

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Addendum

Coordination questions: report of the Administrative Committee on Coordination (item 5 (a))

Annual overview report of the Administrative Committee on Coordination for 1997

1. At its 8th and 9th meetings, on 4 June 1998, the Committee considered the annual overview report of the Administrative Committee on Coordination (ACC) for 1997 (E/1998/21). The Committee welcomed the new Assistant Secretary-General for Policy Coordination and Inter-Agency Affairs, who introduced the report.

Discussion

2. While appreciation was expressed for the report, the view was expressed that it was too descriptive and not sufficiently analytical. Previous decisions of the Committee were recalled whereby it was requested that the ACC report identify key questions, define problems, cite lessons learned and, wherever possible, make specific recommendations for the Committee's consideration, thus enabling the Committee to play a more meaningful coordination role. It was also reiterated that there was need for greater interaction between the Committee and the organizations and agencies of the system, and reference was made to the joint Committee for Programme and Coordination/Administrative Committee on Coordination meetings, discontinued by force of General Assembly resolution 50/227 of 24 May 1996.

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3. Views were expressed that some issues addressed in the context of the work of ACC mentioned in the report did not correspond to the programme priorities established by the General Assembly in the current medium-term plan. Views were also expressed that ACC was a body with membership composed of the United Nations, its funds and programmes and the specialized agencies, which had their own intergovernmental bodies that set priorities for their own respective medium-term plans. Thus, the main objective of ACC, in the context of its coordinating role, was to focus on the interlinkages between the various programme areas of work and thus address the overall priorities of the organizations of the system. It was also explained that priorities had to be assessed over time, and that the work programme of ACC in any given year had to respond to the particular issues being given special attention by the central intergovernmental bodies, such as reform or the follow-up to a given international conference.

4. It was pointed out that the reform process initiated in the United Nations had a broad impact on the United Nations system as a whole. Therefore, the actions that will be implemented should respect fully the relevant mandates, decisions and resolutions of the General Assembly. In this context, the ACC inter-agency machinery should play an important role in pooling capabilities and resources throughout the system, in further rationalizing the division of labour and in avoiding duplication to respond effectively to changing international requirements and increase the efficiency of operations of the United Nations organizations. In this regard, an ACC publication on common themes of the reform processes in the United Nations system was looked forward to.

5. The need for frequent briefings by ACC to relevant intergovernmental bodies was emphasized, since it was believed that this would result in greater interaction between the Committee and the Member States. Such an interaction would facilitate a two-way flow of information and views.

6. Views were expressed concerning the great importance attached to a number of issues mentioned in the report. However, it was stated that greater emphasis on development activities would lead to resolution of many issues that arise from economic deprivation.

7. In relation to section II of the report and to the follow-up to international conferences and summits, it was noted that no reference was made to the implementation and follow-up to the International Conference on Population and Development.

8. With regard to the reference in the ACC report to human rights as a cross-cutting issue, it was pointed out that in the course of the discussion on this issue in document A/52/303, strong views were expressed that if there were any cross-cutting issue in the United Nations, it ought to be development. It was recalled further that the General Assembly, in its consensus resolution 52/220 of 22 December 1997, deleted portions of the document A/52/303 that referred to human rights as a cross-cutting issue, and, therefore, ACC should fully respect this resolution. Views were expressed acknowledging the textual change to resolution 52/220. However, strong views were also expressed that human rights continued to be a cross-cutting issue throughout the United Nations system. Attention was also drawn to resolution 52/12 A, which dealt specifically with the programme of reform of the United Nations and the respect for mandates covered by the medium-term plan.

9. With regard to the issue of African economic recovery and development, it was recalled that the United Nations System-wide Special Initiative on Africa should be pursued as the implementation arm of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa, as called for by the General Assembly. It was considered that the linkage of the Special Initiative with the New Agenda needed to be qualitatively strengthened. Paragraph 7 of the conclusions of the mid-term review of the implementation of the New Agenda,

adopted by the General Assembly in its resolution 51/32 of 6 December 1996, was recalled. It stated that the System-wide Initiative on Africa was complementary to the New Agenda and was designed to facilitate its implementation and the implementation of the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and summits as they related to Africa and that the Special Initiative might also become an impetus for the implementation of all elements of the New Agenda.[1] It was also recalled that paragraph 191 of the Agenda for Development (General Assembly resolution 51/240, annex) stated that the United Nations system had a major role to play in coordinating and implementing activities that address the critical situation in Africa, including through the implementation of the New Agenda. It was therefore pointed out that the references in section V of the ACC report should refer to the implementation of the New Agenda through the Special Initiative, especially since the General Assembly decided in its resolution 51/32 to conduct a final review and appraisal of the implementation of the New Agenda in 2002.

10. In relation to section VI of the report, on operational activities for development, the view was expressed that the triennial review of operational activities for development that would be prepared by the Secretary-General under the guidance of ACC should address all dimensions of development, including, among others, humanitarian activities.

11. With respect to the programme of work of ACC, the view was expressed that attention should continue to be given to the full implementation of United Nations global conferences and summits as a framework for addressing developmental issues, including poverty eradication.

12. Support was expressed for the measures being undertaken within the United Nations system in providing assistance to countries invoking Article 50 of the Charter of the United Nations. It was indicated that many of those countries were doubly penalized by the application of sanctions, and enquiries were made as to whether the ad hoc expert group meeting called for in General Assembly resolution 52/162 of 15 December 1997 with a view to developing a possible methodology for assessing the consequences actually incurred by such States as a result of preventive or enforcement measures had yet been convened. Information was requested on its outcome.

13. It was noted that the members of ACC had pledged to give special attention to the needs and rights of street children and refugee and internally displaced children, and it was emphasized that ACC should also pay due attention to the needs of children under foreign occupation.

14. Appreciation was expressed for the attention being given by ACC to the system's relations with civil society. Views were also expressed that ACC had addressed the subject at a time when the General Assembly had not reached agreement on a definition for civil society. It was recalled that civil society groups operated within the jurisdiction of Member States, and it was noted that ACC should keep this in mind in considering mechanisms for improving relationships with civil society. It was also stated that relationships with the church were of crucial importance, particularly in efforts at reconciliation and peace building, and it was suggested that this element of civil society should not be forgotten as organizations of the system seek to strengthen the relationship with civil society. Views were expressed that the main focus of the discussions of ACC had been on the significance for the system as a whole of the growing involvement of civil society groups in the work of the various organizations of the system under modalities which differed from organization to organization, as directed by the respective government and legislative bodies.

15. The definition and use of the term "sustainable development" in annex III to the ACC report, was questioned. It was noted that the United Nations global conferences had defined

the relationship between economic growth and sustainable development, which was also reflected in the medium-term plan and the Agenda for Development. In replying to the explanation given by the ACC secretariat that sustainable development was the concept used at the nineteenth special session of the General Assembly on the follow-up to the implementation of Agenda 21, it was stressed again that the concept "sustainable development" was defined in paragraph 23 of Assembly resolution S/19-2 as follows: "Economic development, social development and environmental protection are interdependent and mutually reinforcing components of sustainable development". It was further noted that the reference to sustainable development should have recalled that definition that was endorsed by the Assembly. The view was also expressed that the appendix focused on national and regional operations needed for the implementation of the commitments made in Agenda 21, without reference to the required efforts by the international community for the realization of those commitments.

16. With respect to administrative questions, the priority attention given to the issue of the security and safety of United Nations system staff and associated personnel in the field was welcomed, and it was stated that Member States should take the necessary action to ensure the safety of United Nations staff, including early implementation of the Convention on the Safety of United Nations and Associated Personnel. In this regard, the view that the support of Governments should be enlisted in the implementation of the system-wide security policies was welcomed. On the question of the conditions of service and application of the Noblemaire principle, support was expressed for the application of the Noblemaire principle. It was considered that the recent studies of the International Civil Service Commission (ICSC) suggested that the requirements necessary to improve conditions of service had been met, and it remained for all Member States to support them. Views were expressed that the United Nations common system still remained competitive enough, taking into account its overall scope of conditions of service, and recent studies by ICSC proved that. It was also stressed that ACC should undertake a review of the ratio between permanent and fixed-term appointments on posts subject to geographical distribution, with a view to establishing common recruitment policies.

17. With respect to paragraph 4 in the appendix, in which it was suggested that the role of the Commission on Sustainable Development was political, it was stressed that in resolution S/19-2 it was stated that the Commission had a role to play in assessing the challenges of globalization as they relate to sustainable development and that it should promote policies that integrate economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainability and should provide for integrated consideration of linkages, both among sectors and between sectoral and cross-sectoral aspects of Agenda 21, while avoiding repetition of work undertaken by other relevant forums (paras. 130 and 131).

18. In providing clarifications with regard to some of the comments made, the secretariat indicated that all observations would be taken into account in the preparation of future reports. The secretariat also indicated its readiness to provide systematic briefings to members of the Committee, in cooperation with representatives of United Nations agencies and bodies.

Conclusions

19. The Committee took note of the annual overview report of ACC and requested that future reports be more analytical and highlight problems encountered. They should also include a full listing of other system-wide reports before intergovernmental bodies relevant to the issues dealt with in the annual report. The Committee reiterated that ACC, in carrying out its primary task of strengthening coordination of activities of the United Nations system,

should focus on the strategic objectives established in the Charter, the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and the medium-term plans of the organizations of the system.[2]

20. The Committee also recommended that ACC work towards the preparation, in each programme area of broad inter-agency concern, of strategic policy papers indicating issues to be addressed, coordination problems being encountered, what role each agency and/or organization should play and areas where intergovernmental guidance is required.

21. The Committee recommended that ways should be found to analyse and bring to its attention the results of the work of the Economic and Social Council and its functional commissions, through the annual overview report of ACC, on issues dealt with by the Committee within its coordination mandate. In this context, the Committee emphasized the need for frequent briefings by ACC to relevant intergovernmental bodies, which would result in greater interaction between the ACC and Member States. Such an interaction would facilitate a two-way flow of information and views.

22. The Committee welcomed the role being played by ACC to bring about improved management effectiveness and policy coherence in the work of the United Nations system, including at the country level. It looked forward to reviewing the publication under preparation on the common themes guiding reform processes within the system.

Notes

[1] See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-first Session, Supplement No. 48*, para. 44.

[2] Ibid., *Fifty-second Session, Supplement No. 16*, paras. 333 and 335.

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Addendum

Coordination questions: progress report on the system-wide medium-term plan for the advancement of women, 1996-2001 (item 5 (b))

1. At its 9th meeting, on 4 June 1998, the Committee considered the progress report of the Secretary-General entitled "Mid-term review of the implementation of the system-wide medium-term plan for the advancement of women, 1996-2001" (E/CN.6/1998/3). It also had before it a note by the Secretary-General on the implementation of the revised system-wide medium-term plan for the advancement of women, 1996-2001 (E/1998/10) and a letter dated 27 April 1998 from the Chairperson of the Commission on the Status of Women to the Chairperson of the Committee for Programme and Coordination (E/AC.51/1998/8).

Discussion

2. It was emphasized that the system-wide medium-term plan serves as an effective monitoring and coordination tool at all levels. Appreciation was expressed for the preparation of the progress report, which was considered informative, comprehensive and insightful. It was recognized that the report demonstrated growing support for active gender-mainstreaming policies in the United Nations system.

3. Appreciation was expressed for the efforts of many organizations and entities of the United Nations system to implement the 12 critical areas of concern of the Beijing Platform for Action, in particular programmes directed towards the empowerment of women, as reflected in the progress report. Appreciation was further expressed for the gender-mainstreaming efforts of the International Labour Organization (ILO), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), and the United

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Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF). It was recognized that their programmes were directed towards empowerment, education and training, and employment of women.

4. Requests were made for additional information on certain areas of United Nations programming, including education of women and girls as it related to increased productivity and lower fertility, acquired immunodeficiency syndrome and female genital mutilation.

5. It was suggested that emphasis should be placed on paragraph 11 of the report, which focuses on the impact of armed conflict on women, especially in foreign occupied areas that have been declared disputed territories by the Security Council in its resolutions. Delegations also stressed the need to establish an international criminal court, with special attention to war crimes that affect women and girls.

6. Attention was drawn to the mandates given by the General Assembly to mainstream a gender perspective into all policies and programmes in the United Nations system. Reference was made in particular to paragraph 4 of resolution 52/100, in which the Assembly called upon Member States and the United Nations system to implement the Platform for Action, in particular by promoting an active and visible policy of mainstreaming a gender perspective at all levels, including in the design, monitoring and evaluation of all policies and programmes to ensure effective implementation of all critical areas of concern in the Platform for Action. The usefulness of Economic and Social Council agreed conclusion 1997/2 on gender mainstreaming was emphasized. It was noted that in paragraph 11 of resolution 52/100 the Committee had been requested by the Assembly to ensure that all programmes, medium-term plans and programme budgets visibly mainstream a gender perspective. Appreciation was expressed to the Inter-agency Committee for Women and Gender Equality for having made great progress in supporting the mainstreaming of a gender perspective into the work of the United Nations system.

7. Regret was expressed that the financial crisis would adversely affect the implementation of the mandates for the advancement of women.

8. It was noted with great concern that progress in achieving gender balance in staffing seemed to suffer owing to the ongoing financial crisis and budget-cutting in the United Nations. It was emphasized that the interests and the rights of women needed to be reflected in staff development and career planning.

9. The view was expressed that the system-wide medium-term plan was ambitious, setting longer-term goals. It was felt that the report gave a candid analysis of the obstacles encountered in its effective and efficient implementation. Concern was expressed that satisfactory mainstreaming was still far from being achieved. It was reiterated that gender mainstreaming required integration of a gender perspective into all policies and programmes in the United Nations system. The view was expressed that while gender mainstreaming was a gradual process, it should be pursued diligently.

10. Great concern was expressed about the reported low level of commitment on the part of United Nations managers and a lack of attention by them to policies regarding women and gender.

11. Grave concern was also expressed about the low commitment on the part of some United Nations agencies to gender mainstreaming, as evidenced by the report. It was noted that some United Nations entities seemed to equate gender mainstreaming issues with gender

balance in staffing matters, resulting in a poor understanding of gender mainstreaming and its implications for programming.

12. The view was expressed that United Nations entities should strengthen their support to gender mainstreaming efforts at all levels, including the national level.

Conclusions and recommendations

13. The Committee endorsed the recommendations contained in the progress report (E/CN.6/1998/3, para. 52) and recommended that the Economic and Social Council approve them. The Committee recommended, in particular, that Member States take advantage of the recommendation contained in paragraph 52 (g), in which the use of expertise offered by the Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women, the Division for the Advancement of Women, the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) and the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW) was advised for the design, monitoring and evaluation of gender-responsive policies and programmes. The Committee also highlighted the recommendation in paragraph 52 (h) on employing inter-agency coordination mechanisms and bodies within the United Nations to promote an increasingly coordinated overall approach to gender mainstreaming.

14. The Committee took note of the comments made at the forty-second session of the Commission on the Status of Women on the obstacles mentioned in the report. It recommended that measures should be taken to overcome the obstacles in the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action and the system-wide medium-term plan.

15. The Committee recalled its own commitment by which it agreed to ensure, in its examination of the medium-term plan for the period 1998-2001, that the mainstreaming of a gender perspective was reflected in the individual programmes of the medium-term plan and emphasized the responsibility of programme managers for progress in gender mainstreaming (A/51/16 (part I), para. 167). Accordingly, the Committee took note of paragraph 11 of General Assembly resolution 52/100, in which the Assembly requested all bodies that deal with programme and budgetary matters, including the Committee for Programme and Coordination , to ensure that all programmes, medium-term plans and programme budgets visibly mainstream a gender perspective.

16. The Committee recommended that measures be taken to overcome institutional obstacles to gender mainstreaming in the United Nations system. It invited the entities of the United Nations system to place more emphasis on coordination and collaboration among themselves in that regard.

17. Commending the 34 entities of the United Nations system that had contributed to the preparation of the progress report, the Committee noted the absence of some key United Nations entities from the progress assessment. It recommended that all United Nations entities cooperate with the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women and the Division for the Advancement of Women in monitoring the continued implementation of the system-wide medium-term plan.

18. The Committee recommended that entities of the United Nations system provide or increase gender analysis training to strengthen implementation of the system-wide plan and mainstreaming of a gender perspective in the United Nations system.

19. In recalling Economic and Social Council agreed conclusion 1997/2, the Committee recommended that all entities designate focal points to facilitate and monitor the implementation of the system-wide medium-term plan and mainstreaming of a gender perspective in the work of their respective entities.

20. The Committee recommended that efforts of the United Nations system to mainstream a gender perspective be further intensified, including the preparation of clear and practical guidelines for the implementation of Economic and Social Council agreed conclusion 1997/2. It further recommended development of performance indicators to allow the measurement of progress in the implementation of the system-wide medium-term plan. The Committee called on all senior managers in the United Nations system to give high priority to gender mainstreaming, and, in this regard, to cooperate with, and seek the guidance of, the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women.

21. The Committee, in reiterating the goal of gender balance in staffing, re-emphasized that this goal should be achieved in accordance with Article 101 of the Charter of the United Nations and recommended the full and speedy implementation of section III.C of resolution 51/226 of 3 April 1997 and resolution 52/96 of 12 December 1997.

22. The Committee agreed to consider the new draft system-wide medium-term for the advancement of women for the period 2002-2005, to be prepared by the Secretary-General in his capacity as Chairman of the Administrative Committee on Coordination, in the year 2000 (see Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/34).

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Addendum

Coordination questions

The United Nations System-wide Special Initiative for the Implementation of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s (item 5(c))

1. At its 10th meeting, on 5 June 1998, the Committee considered the progress report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the United Nations System-wide Special Initiative on Africa for the implementation of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s (E/AC.51/1998/7).

Discussion

2. The view was expressed that the progress report had shortcomings, among others that no programmes in the two priority areas of regional cooperation and integration and economic diversification requested by the Committee at its thirty-seventh session were elaborated, and that throughout the report no concrete results were provided.

3. It was also felt that the progress report should have been more analytical than descriptive, and that language used in some paragraphs of the report, for example paragraphs 11 (a) and 12, was not the kind of language that should be used in United Nations reports.

4. It was further deplored that the progress report did not provide information on additional resources mobilized by the Special Initiative and urged that more resources be made available for its implementation. Dissatisfaction was expressed about the fact that in the only instance where the report tried to provide figures, which was the health sector, it was mentioned that to support the development of that sector in 10 African countries,

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about $3.5 billion was needed, of which more than half would have to be provided by the countries themselves and the remaining $1.5 billion would have to be mobilized by donors, including $500 million that might be provided by the World Bank.

5. Regarding the specific recommendations made by the Committee at its previous session,[1] satisfaction was expressed at the public awareness role exercised by the Secretary-General, but concern was voiced as to whether the Office of the Special Coordinator for Africa and the Least Developed Countries, the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) had properly carried out their tasks in that respect. The need to rationalize the various instruments being used in the field, namely, the United Nations development assistance frameworks, the country strategy notes and other sectoral programmes, was emphasized. It was also felt that the linkage between the Special Initiative and the development assistance frameworks and country strategy notes should be more concrete and better structured.

6. The need to promote national ownership of the Special Initiative by African countries was stressed, and concern was expressed that a lot remained to be done to achieve that objective. The need to build partnership around national priorities, strategies and programmes was underscored. In that regard, it was stated that African countries must define their own priorities and programmes based on their respective needs. Views were expressed that the spirit of such partnership must reflect respect for the principle of sovereign equality of States.

7. Concern was voiced that the priority areas mentioned in the report were not exhaustive and, therefore, did not cover all the areas of concern of the African countries. It was requested that the priority areas of the Special Initiative should be those laid down by the Member States in the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s. The view was expressed that the areas of priority should include, among others, poverty eradication, which should be the paramount activity within the United Nations system and without which success of the Special Initiative could not be measured, regional cooperation and integration, economic diversification, agricultural development and food security, soil degradation, water, trade and investment. Others welcomed the refocusing of the Special Initiative on areas where results had been achieved and underscored the need for the Special Initiative to concentrate on the priority areas of education, health, governance, harnessing information technology for development, gender and population.

8. It was underlined that the Special Initiative should serve as an instrument of coordination at various levels, including the national level and as a means to rationalize the utilization of resources made available to Africa. In that connection, the importance of coordination between the Special Initiative and bilateral organizations at the field level was emphasized. The view was expressed that the involvement of the Bretton Woods institutions was an important aspect of the overall coordination of development aid in Africa.

9. The view was expressed that there was a need to intensify the synergy between the Special Initiative and other programmes and initiatives, including those of the countries concerned. On the one hand, concern was expressed about the existence of two secretariats within the United Nations system and about whether a secretariat for the Special Initiative separate from the Office of the Special Coordinator for Africa and the Least Developed Countries was needed; on the other hand, it was noted that the two secretariats performed different functions, with the Office of the Special Coordinator providing support to intergovernmental bodies and consideration of issues related to African development, and the Special Initiative secretariat providing coordination and planning for programmes.

10. The view was expressed that it was necessary to use concrete indicators of performance to measure progress made in the implementation of the Special Initiative and to analyse the lessons learned with a view to more efficient and effective implementation of the Special Initiative. It was emphasized that if the Special Initiative were to achieve its implementation in the priority areas indicated above, it would be important to focus more on operational activities than on organizing colloquia, seminars and workshops.

11. Concern was voiced about the challenges that the Special Initiative was facing in identifying in a convincing manner its added value in view of declining official development assistance and marginal investment flows for Africa, its mainstreaming within the United Nations system and the building of sustainable partnerships for Africa through the Special Initiative. It was stated that the success and effectiveness of the Special Initiative were to be judged in terms of its ability to address those challenges.

12. With respect to the linkage between the Special Initiative and the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s, it was stressed that the Ad Hoc Committee of the Whole of the General Assembly for the Mid-term Review of the Implementation of the New Agenda stated in its report[2] that the Special Initiative was complementary to the New Agenda and was designed to facilitate its implementation and the implementation of the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and summits as they related to Africa, and that the Special Initiative might also become an impetus for the implementation of all elements of the New Agenda. It was furthermore recalled that the Assembly, in its resolution 51/32 of 6 December 1996, adopted the conclusions of the Ad Hoc Committee and requested the Secretary-General, pending the final review and appraisal of the New Agenda in 2002, to submit to it at its fifty-third and fifty-fifth sessions a progress report. Reference was also made to the Agenda for Development,[3] which stated that the United Nations system had a major role to play in coordinating and implementing activities that addressed the critical situation in Africa, including through the implementation of the New Agenda and the follow-up of the outcome of the Tokyo International Conference on African Development and other related initiatives. In order fully to comply with Assembly decisions and resolutions concerning United Nations activities in Africa, it was emphasized that reference should be made in the future in all United Nations documents to the implementation of the New Agenda through the Special Initiative on Africa.

Conclusion and recommendations

13. The Committee took note of the progress report of the Secretary-General and of the results achieved in the implementation of the Special Initiative.

14. The Committee considered that those results were interesting and constituted some progress compared with the previous situation. They were nonetheless insufficient as regards the number of countries and the limited areas covered so far.

15. The Committee underlined that the development of Africa was one of the priorities of the medium-term plan and that the critical economic situation of Africa was of serious concern to the international community in general.

16. The Committee also underlined that the General Assembly would undertake the final review and appraisal of the implementation of the United Nations New Agenda in 2002.

17. The Committee recommended that the Administrative Committee on Coordination be requested to intensify its efforts to mobilize fully the analytical and operational capacities and capabilities of the United Nations system at the service of the Special Initiative for the implementation of the New Agenda, in order to achieve coverage of the maximum number of countries and areas of activity.

18. The Committee recommended that the different lead agencies be called upon, under the coordination of the Steering Committee, to develop, in their respective areas, a common strategic framework for action that analyses and highlights the problems, sets the goals, determines the respective contributions of organizations, indicates necessary resources and sets reference points, including performance indicators, in order to permit an effective follow-up of results, taking as the starting point the final review and appraisal of the New Agenda in 2002 and implied incentive measures.

19. The Committee recommended that the Secretariat of the Special Initiative be strengthened, and especially that its working relations be tightened with the Office of the Special Coordinator for Africa and the Least Developed Countries, the substantive divisions of ECA and the focal points of agencies and organizations, including, in case of need, the United Nations Inter-agency Task Force on Africa's Critical Economic Situation, Recovery and Development, and by allocating to it the necessary resources.

20. In the area of coordination, the Committee took note of the actions undertaken in response to the recommendations made at its thirty-seventh session. It requested that efforts be intensified in that respect, in particular as regards the orientation and advocacy role of the Secretary-General, the follow-up and catalytic role of the Office of the Special Coordinator for Africa and the Least Developed Countries and the operational role of UNDP and ECA. The Committee requested that further coordination measures aimed at establishing a dynamic and a common framework of action be strengthened at the field level. This framework should indicate the contributions of the different partners.

21. Regarding the linkages between the Special Initiative and the New Agenda, the Committee recommended that they be further clarified, and reaffirmed that the Special Initiative was the dynamic instrument for the implementation of the New Agenda. The Committee recalled the recommendation made at its thirty-seventh session that programmes should be rapidly prepared in the two priority areas of regional cooperation and integration and economic diversification.

22. The Committee recommended that efforts be intensified in order to establish a vigorous plan of increased mobilization of resources directed at the eradication of poverty, economic development, substantial reduction of debt, institution of partnership innovations, market access and trade opportunities, mobilization of domestic resources and allocation of additional resources. In that regard, the Committee called for the greater involvement of Bretton Woods Institutions in the increased mobilization of resources for capacity-building of African countries.

23. The Committee requested that a new progress report on the implementation of the Special Initiative be submitted for consideration at its thirty-ninth session, including measures taken in response to the foregoing recommendations.

Notes

[1] *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-second Session, Supplement No. 16* (A/52/16), paras. 356 and 357.

[2] *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-first Session, Supplement No. 48* (A/51/48), para. 7.

[3] *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-first Session, Supplement No. 45* (A/51/45), annex.